

CONTENTS

List of Maps		xiii
Prologue: A Tale of Two Farms		1
Two farms « Collapses, past and present * Vanished Edens? *		
A five-point framework • Businesses and the environment *		
The comparative method • Plan of the book •		
Part One: MODERN MONTANA		25
Chapter 1: Under Montana's Big Sky	2	7
Stan Falkow's story • Montana and me • Why begin with Montana? * Montana's economic history * Mining • Forests * Soil * Water * Native and non-native species * Differing visions * Attitudes towards regulation • Rick Laible's story * Chip Pigman's story » Tim Huls's story • John Cook's story • Montana, model of the world •		
Part Two: PAST SOCIETIES		77
Chapter 2: Twilight at Easter		79
The quarry's mysteries * Easter's geography and history • People and food * Chiefs, clans, and commoners • Platforms and statues • Carving, transporting, erecting • The vanished forest • Consequences for society • Europeans and explanations • Why was Easter fragile? • Easter as metaphor •		
Chapter 3: The Last People Alive: Pitcairn and Henderson Islands	120	
Pitcairn before the <i>Bounty</i> • Three dissimilar islands • Trade « The movie's ending *		
Chapter 4: The Ancient Ones: The Anasazi and Their Neighbors		136
Desert farmers • Tree rings • Agricultural strategies • Chaco's problems and packrats • Regional integration • Chaco's decline and end • Chaco's message •		

Chapter 5: The Maya Collapses	15	7
Mysteries of lost cities * The Maya environment * Maya agriculture • Maya history • Copán * Complexities of collapses • Wars and droughts • Collapse in the southern lowlands * The Maya message *		
Chapter 6: The Viking Prelude and Fugues		178
Experiments in the Atlantic * The Viking explosion * Autocatalysis • Viking agriculture * Iron * Viking chiefs * Viking religion • Orkneys, Shetlands, Faeroes * Iceland's environment • Iceland's history • Iceland in context • Vinland »		
Chapter 7: Norse Greenland's Flowering		211
Europe's outpost • Greenland's climate today * Climate in the past • Native plants and animals • Norse settlement * Farming • Hunting and fishing • An integrated economy * Society » Trade with Europe • Self-image •		
Chapter 8: Norse Greenland's End		248
Introduction to the end • Deforestation • Soil and turf damage • The Inuit's predecessors ^a Inuit subsistence • Inuit/Norse relations * The end * Ultimate causes of the end •		
Chapter 9: Opposite Paths to Success		277
Bottom up, top down * New Guinea highlands * Tikopia • Tokugawa problems * Tokugawa solutions » Why Japan succeeded • Other successes •		
Part Three: MODERN SOCIETIES		309
Chapter 10: Mai thus in Africa: Rwanda's Genocide		311
A dilemma • Events in Rwanda • More than ethnic hatred • Buildup in Kanama • Explosion in Kanama » Why it happened •		
Chapter 11: One Island, Two Peoples, Two Histories: The Dominican Republic and Haiti		329
Differences • Histories • Causes of divergence • Dominican environmental impacts • Balaguer • The Dominican environment today * The future *		

Chapter 12: China, Lurching Giant	358
China's significance * Background * Air, water, soil * Habitat, species, megaprojects * Consequences • Connections • The future *	
Chapter 13: "Mining" Australia	378
Australia's significance * Soils * Water • Distance • Early history • Imported values « Trade and immigration • Land degradation * Other environmental problems * Signs of hope and change »	
PartFour: PRACTICAL LESSONS	417
Chapter 14: Why Do Some Societies Make Disastrous Decisions?	419
Road map for success • Failure to anticipate * Failure to perceive * Rational bad behavior • Disastrous values • Other irrational failures • Unsuccessful solutions * Signs of hope •	
Chapter 15: Big Businesses and the Environment: Different Conditions, Different Outcomes	441
Resource extraction • Two oil fields • Oil company motives • Hardrock mining operations * Mining company motives • Differences among mining companies • The logging industry • Forest Stewardship Council • The seafood industry • Businesses and the public •	
Chapter 16: The World as a Polder: What Does It All Mean to Us Today?	486
Introduction • The most serious problems - If we don't solve them ... * Life in Los Angeles » One-liner objections • The past and the present • Reasons for hope •	
Acknowledgments	526
Further Readings	529
Index	561
Illustration Credits	576